BEAUTY'S SECRET

By ALAN MUIR. Author of 'Vanity Hardware,' "Golden

Sibyl was really alarmed at this suggestion been her husband, who, as she well knew was neither a meddler nor one who formed his opinions hastily. She hurried off to Subia and declared her misgivings; and all Sobia could say was that there seemed good ason for fearing that something was wrong But Sophia added, she had already tried every possible means to find out her mother's a tual position and motives, and had entirely

in that case," Archibald Goldmore mid. when his wife reported this result to him. " shall call upon your mother myself and introduce the subject. It is my duty to offer her my counsel. What can she know about

And he called upon little Mrs. Barbara. who received him with her usual cheerfulness Goldmore was a favorite with her in

-You know me well enough to be quite sure that I am no 'Paul Pry,' " the millionaire said He seemed to think that there was magnanimity in his very mention of that character in connection with himself, "47 hate I don't intrude' is not often on my lips, for this simple reason-I know I don't in-

Lattle Mrs. Temple gave him a brisk nod and smile, and he proceeded, approaching his subject with slow dignity, as if he were driving the lord mayor's coach round a

We have been a little surprised-Sibvl and my elf-at the great change you have made in your household; and knowing, as we do, your sound common sense, we are sure there is a good reason for it. It is a great hange, he added, looking round the small drawing room, "although you have displayed your sual good taste here from-from-floor

"Yes." Mrs. Temple replied unconcernedly, "it is a nice little house."

This has been a bad time for investments. Goldmore remarked, resolved to keep near his real business, "and expenses are very heavy. I have sometimes thought how little I imagined, when I first married, how costly my establishment would be." The old rogue lived to the full a third within his income. -l am sometimes frightened at expenditure, Mrs. Temple." "Are you!" she remarked. "Now, I never

"I am glad to hear it," he answered. tell you the truth, I was afraid that you might have found your own expenses a little in excess of your calculations; and to be quite plain with you, I came this morning to know if there is any business you would like to tak over with me. I know," Goldmore said. with the modesty of a monarch, "something about affairs. Now can I be of any use to you! Can my knowledge of-the money market -this being a joke he laughed a lit tle-"he of any use to you?" "Not any, Archibald," she said. "I always

manage my own business." "There is no difficulty I can clear no?" "All my business is straightforward and

"Then," said the baffled inquirer, "it only remains for me to say that I hope you do not consider my visit and my offer at all "Quite the contrary, Archibald," she cried vivaciously. "Kind, most kind. No one in the world I would sooner have consulted if I

had wanted advice. But I don't want advice. Archibald." So Archibald Goldmore went home as wise as he came; and when his wife met him in the avenue and asked him if he knew everything.

it was with some slight vexation he replied that he knew nothing. "But I have my fears," he said, "and very grave fears. However," he added, seeing his wife's face fall, "don't be alarmed. If anything happens we shall see what can be done." He spoke like a financial pillar; there could be no dreadful crash in the family so

long as he stood unshaken. Egerton and Caroline talked the matter over, too, and Egerton said at once that his mother-in-law was going out of her mind, and deeming it his duty to prepare. Sophia

for the worst. I have noticed this coming on for months, he said to her, while she could scarcely look him in the face for laughter. "There have been many symptoms which I have been watching I would not be frightened, Sophia -being frightened never does any good-but still, if I were you, I should sleep with a strait waistcoat under my pillow, and then, if anything sudden happened, you could clap

it on Forewarned is forearmed, Sophia." Thus both within the family circle and outside it the affairs of Mrs. Temple were discussed, with great assiduity; but relatives, friends and acquaintances were alike left in

The ordinary set of people talked the matter over, wondered, surmised, and then forgot all about it. But the family could not so lightly dismiss a doubt which concerned their own interests; and in the family the whis pered belief was that the little mother, for all her shrewdness, had run into extravagame, and that poverty was now forcing her to retreach. Then came questions: What is her position now! From what source comes her mome? What will Sophia have when she diest. And these misgivings were the more auxious, because it was already known that a portion of her property, at least, would at her death go to her first husband's heir.

CHAPTER IV: REV. ANTHONY BRENT CEASES TO BE RECTOR With all her seriousness Sophia had never been what we call an ecclesiastical girl. The modern fashion of church decoration and

other customs of reverence and taste in religion, had not at that time fairly arisen; but lades were even then very active in church Work From this Sophia had always kept alonf, greatly to the surprise of successive clergymen, who had marked her as likely to le queful in their parishes. To repeated invitations that she would become a district visitor or Sunday school teacher Sophia had always answered no; and she had never given any reason for this refusal. .

Whether she liked dancing, and feared that her pleasure might be restricted, or what may have been her reason, I cannot guess. Even when our rector tried to persuade her to help him, her answer was still a simple no; nor could the merry little clergyman by any semi-jocose questioning extract remeastrance; but with no better result. Accordingly Mr. Brent was somewhat surprised when about six months after his son's departure. Sophia asked him if she could be of any ise to him in the parish or the Sunday Of course be accepted her offer gladly And a capital teacher and punctual Visitor be found her. But Mr. Brent noticed that at their various little meetings Sophia would manage to linger until the other lades were gone, then she would talk a bit, and somehow the talk always veered about till it settled on Percival, when Sophia would ask a few questions and be gone. Even little Mr. Brent, who was not an observer of things. sometimes felt that these two or three little sentimes about Percival were with Sophia the business of the day. At an earlier period of his vareer he would have broken many a jest upon this discovery; but jests were bygones with our poor rector. The twinkle had fallen from his eye, and the blitheness had sunk out of his tone. A pallor was stealing over his face, and he was fast turning gray As one of his parishioners who made her living by laundry work said, "He looked like a gown that had been to the wash;" the colors had run; what remained was himself and not himself,

And how, disregarding for a moment our small chronology, let me dismiss the rector from this tale, where, indeed, he has little

Poor Sophia clung to him more than most of his parishioners and she found a real Dieasure in his society, because it seemed to be a kind of remote contact with Percival.

The bedroom where Percival had slept from boyhood was in that house. The books he had read were on the shelves. Here he used to sit at dinner. There was the garden walk where he was wont to munter with his pipe.
She knew the very peg where his hat used to
hang. Somehow he did not seem quite so far away when she was in the precincts of his own home, and the rector's dispirited talk had a certain liveliness for her, because he was Percival's father. Occasionally, too, she would get a glimpse at her absent lad himself. For instance, one day, as they were

walking together to the garden gate, the "Percy planted that rose." Next week, as they went the same way, Sophia stopped beside the rose tree to pluck off a few withered leaves and make the plant look trim. Mr. Brent, stopping with her, said in his abstracted way: "I never told you; Percival planted that

He never told her! Why, by that time she knew how many leaves were on it, and could spell its name and knew its prospect of life, having become for Percival's sake a perfect borticultural actuary. Then another day the rector said listlessly

for he never joked with her about his son, and indeed seemed to have only a faint remembrance of that connection: "I heard from Percy this morning; would you care to hear his letter!"

Sophia, who would have lived on bread and water for a week rather than miss one line her darling wrote, said, trying with miserable affectation to imitate the rector's apathetic

"Yes, if it is not troubling you." "Perhaps," Mr. Brent said, "as you don't seem greatly to care for it, we need not read this one, but wait for the next."

He said this quite innocently, but he put Sophia in a dreadful fix. With the instinct of true generalship, however, she resolved to recover her lost position by a bold stroke. "I would not miss hearing it for the world." she said audaciously. "O, do read it!"

And the rector, looking up with a faint smile, like a man who remembers something, took the letter out and read it through. In none of these letters did Percy mention her name, until three years after his departure, when one day the rector read this line: "If you ever see the girl who was once my little Sophia, give her my love."

He read it mechanically, as he did everything now; then, holding the letter with fingers, it slipped from him and skimmed down under the table, and presently he was called from the room. Sophia dropped on her knees and caught the sheet up, and read the line again: "If you ever see the girl who was once my

Little Sophia, give her my love " Bless me, how she kissed that sheet! It got

all the love kisses that had been ripening on ber lips for six and thirty months. Had it been the age of transformation, that sheet would surely have turned into a lover under the transmuting power of those kisses. And then Miss Sophia, who had a terribly tender conscience of her own, looked at the letter, and colored up at a certain suggestion of her own mind, and wondered would it be very wrong, and would the rector ever find it out, and was it very mean of her to do it in the hope that he would never find it out? And. deciding on action, she nicely tore off the finest little morsel of the paper, where on the last line these precious words were inscribed and she slipped the shred into her watch case, where she could look at it night and morning. The little girl that was my Sophia. "That

is! that shall be! until you bid her cease!" she aid a thousand times, as if that morse of paper were his living spekesman. Truly, the girl was very much in love, and absence made her heart grow fonder, which is not usual with either male or female hearts, unless I see the world wrongly altogether.

About this time Sophia-and not Sophia only, but all of us-began to notice that Mr. Brent looked paler than usual, walked with a slight drag of the right foot, and sometimes missed a word out of a sentence without being aware of it. Again, he would observe the mistake, and correct it with an appearance of irritation. "Brain mischief going on," old Sparker whispered. And he was right; for one Sunday evening, after preaching, the rector suddenly became speechless in the vestry, and lost his power of motion. He never spoke a syllable again; and even when he opened his eyes there was no reason in them. A dreadful storm of wind and rain came on that night, and blew the golden cock from off the church steeple, and some of the masonry with it. The tempest raged round the rectory garden, and uprooted two great elm trees, and cast them across the lawn in gigantic ruin. Meanwhile the rector lay as quiet as if a summer breeze was blowing. There was no storm that could roar loud enough to disturb his sleep. And in the morning, when we awoke to see what the wind had done in our gardens and parks, we heard our kind-hearted little rector had de-

parted from us forever, just while the storm

was uttering its fiercest blast. Wess id that we could have better spared a better man, looked grave a moment, remarked how uncertain life is, and then talked of the storm, and forgot the rector. But to Sophia his death was a terrible sorrow. Comehow Percival seemed gone; she wou! hear no more about him, nor have the remote but still very actual comfort of talking with his father and seeing his old haunts. She had i orne trials already, and other trials awaited her; but this was, after all, one of the sorest she ever felt. She grew lonely, sad. doubting; began to think Percy would forget her; tried valiantly to battle with her fears; cried many hours when she was alone, then wired her eyes and went downstairs smilingly; but it was an aching heart that beat in her breast. And the body of the rector was leid to sleep in the churchyard, and his succes or came. The king was dead, and the cry was, 'Long live the king!" for we were all pleased with our new parson. He preached sermons shorter by five minutes than those of Mr. Brent. He kept two curates, good-looking bachelors. He worked the parish well. So we confessed every one that the loss of poor Brent was gain to us; especially these last few years, we said, when rouble overcame him, and this brain mischief had been stealthily making its way nearer to his vital part. Very soon the old rector's name was forgotten; but day by day

and week by week we noticed that over the

grave where his mortal part lay fresh flow-

ers were strewn by some tender and unforgetting hand. CHAPTER V.

THE LIVES OF OUR CHARACTERS ADVANCE. Five years had passed away since Sophia and Percival were parted, and time had left its marks upon other personages of our story Sibyl had greatly increased in personal tractiveness. Her dark superb style was developed and heightened as she drew nearer to the meridian of life. No doubt the early bloom of youth was gone; but her form had become more finely rounded, and her carriage had become more stately. She was a beautiful woman of the world; no man ever looked at her once only. But her manner had become more reticent than ever. She relied of her beauty for a place among her sex, and was at no pains to cultivate conversation, letters or any branch of the art of pleasing, except the setting forth of personal charms. Had her manner and her talk been what she might easily have made them, she would have shone out as a beauty, indeed, in the prime of her womanhood. For Sibyl had no lack of sense nor of education either; but proudly reposing on her incontestible loveliness, she rather withdrew than put forward her other attractions. Still she could display herself when she pleased; one occasion I well remember, when she met in company a vivacious Italian, who was extremely struck with her appearance, and paid her a profusion of gay compliments. At last, his English failing, he tried to enhance his polite speeches by some poetical quotation in his own language, adding that he was afraid she would hardly understand what he had said. On the instant Sibyl answered him back with a return quotation, as I understood, from the same author. Not knowing Italian, I could not appreciate her readiress; but that the retort was lively and happy was sufficiently proved by the foreigner's delight. His eyes sparkled with pleasure.

"You know more than I do," he exclaimed,

ciapping his hands. "You are a wonder—a wonder, my dear lady!" But Sibyl relapsed into silence, and treated her success with a sincerity of indifference which showed Low lightly she regarded any

Car had meanwhile changed in a way the very opposite. She had grown thinner; and her frame, which was a large one, was more prominent. Car had gone in for intellectual ideas, and was improving her mind diligently, and was fast obtaining in our little town the reputation of being what is now called a woman's rights woman. She had become rather too fond of talking in mixed companies on high subjects, and so fell into the very error her lively little mother had foreseen ten years before.

"As to Car," Mrs. Barbara said one day, she is turning schoolmistress. She talks lectures. I wonder she does not get a few lessons in action," the little satirist said; "it would become her drawing room and dinner table finely. Any actor or popular preacher could tell how to arrange her elbows when she is discoursing. I can't; for my education, dears, was neglected-in that particular department. We only danced and sang and firted when I was a girl. Why, I remember once meeting a man who talked of Peru, and, I assure you, dears, I thought it was somewhere in Germany! But what matter? The world was ours, and we it only to live and enjoy and make others enjoy. And we did t, girls; we did it! O, that I was young

again!" Caroline Doolittle, however, was not very popular in Kettlewell; and this was undoubtedly owing, not to her sound mental cultivation-which was as genuine as it was laudable-but to the mischievous habit she had of bringing her attainments into prominence.- I suppose she did it to manifest her superiority over the rest of the women; but, unfortunately, the result was that, while she vexed the women, which she did not mind, she repelled the men, which she did mind very

One man, however, paid her the tribute of a homage which was as unceasing as the voice of a waterfall. Morning, noon and night Egerton ounded the praises of his wife. He had grown stout and healthy looking, and he was as great a simpleton as ever. Indeed, his giggle had got new notes of imbecility in it, and was now a perfect wonder of vacuity in unarticulated sound. He had a slight drop in his lower lip, too, and a fixed smile, which might have made his very dog understand what mental weakness is in mankind. But Egerton adored his wife. They had three children now, and from infancy he pointed these children to their mamma as the sole model of excellence and strength. Egerton was very fond of nursing his children, and

hour, telling them at brief intervals to look at their mamma "Tremendously gifted woman," he would ometimes say to his friends. Then, dropping his voice like Guy Fawkes in the conspirators' room: "Sometimes I see her reading for two hours at a stretch. I have timed her by my chronometer. What would have become o

would walk up and down with them by the

me if I had not married that woman I don't like to say. I think," Egerton would add colemnly, "I think, with my disposition and my way of looking at things, you know, I should have gone to the bad." to the study of cooking, and had a little room fitted up with a stove, and hung round with pots and pans. I think this must have been

about the time when the great Soy- was teaching us English people how to work wonders with soup and fish and fowl. In this room Egerton would concoct rare dishes, generally coming out with a very red face, and now and then upsetting a boiling saucepan down his thighs; on which occasions he would rush from the room shrieking, and declare that it was really too bad, and he would give the whole thing up. Egerton had an dea of working a reform in the present way of cooking red mullet.

"A delicious fish," he would say; "but under the present system it is sent up in paper; treated, in fact, as if it were a package. It s intolerable that a delicious fish should be treated as if it were a package."

Time, which was writing its record on our younger people, had not forgot to pencil deeper lines on Archibald Goldmore. Visible signs of advancing years were upon him, and the elephantine firmness of his tread was going. He stooped; his hair was not so gray s once it had been. Goldmore, the wise, the ensible, the millionaire, was dyeing his hair to keep up the appearance of youth beside his lovely wife. Ah, lovely young women, what fools you make of us withering, elderly men! And even the little mother, so long undying her energy, began to show symptoms of decline. The light step was falling into a slower movement; the quick motions of the frame were seldom seen; she was growing a little deaf, and every one observed it, though, with characteristic vivacity, she tried to hide the failing. She began to like quiet-bodily quiet-and would sit in her chair hour after hour; but her mind was as active and her tongue as pungent as ever; and often Sophia would laugh till she was tired at the little woman's quaint remarks or droll stories of days gone by. She commented on everybody and everything with the same satire, sense and absorbed worldliness as of old. Her two sons-in-law furnished her with abundant material for criticism; and Sophia often blushed to think how heartily she enjoyed her mother's caustic comments on Goldmore and Egerton. Both were favorites with the old woman; but Goldmore's mercantile stiffness and Egerton's feebleness of mind were too tempting for her to resist.

"I can hardly keep my countenance, Sophy, she used to say, "when these two men come in together. One I can stand; but both is more than mortal can." (They generally looked in after church.) "'Mrs. Temple, how do you find yourself this morning? Pretty well? hit off Goldmore's voice to the note. And then: "'O, how are you? Tremendously warm day, isn't it? I do dislike a tremendously warm day!" delivered exactly as Egerton would. Thereupon the little satirist would fall back in her chair laughing, and pleased to see Sophia laughing. "Now, really, mamma, you are too bad!"

Sophia would say. "Not a bit, Sophy. You like it, or you would not laugh. And, beside, why need the old man be a bore and the young man a blockhead? O, may the day never dawn when I do anything but laugh at a stupid or a fool!" Still Sophia was kept in wonder and fear by her mother's growing turn for economy. In some things she was becoming almost penurious, and the question: "What will it cost?" which once she disdained to ask of anything that pleased her, was now never off her lips. There was a positive alarm about her view, which was full of grave suggestions; and Sophia quite tried to reconcile herself to Goldmore's opinion that her mother had lived beyond her means, and was now trying to eke out her means. Beside, the old woman would sometimes, in a covert way, try to sound Sophia as to what she would do when left alone in the world, and once she actually asked her if she had any idea of ever making money for herself. This uneasy question pointed only too plainly in the direction of the practical Goldmore's observation, that Mrs. Temp e was living on an income that would perish with her, and that Sophia would be left in poverty. But beyond conjecture no one could go, for the old woman kept her secret, and would not suffer any interrogations. To Sophia she confided that she felt a little alteration in strength; but even to her she would not admit that the cause was old

"I am a little exhausted, Sophy," she said one day. "You see, I have worked hard at enjoyment for a great many years. I shall do just what Johnson used to make our peach trees and vines do at the Beeches. Let me rest for a few months, and next year I shall recruit, regain strength, Sophy, and be as lively as ever. O, Sophy, Sophy," she cried, clapping her withered hands together with a sprightliness which, whether real or feigned, was equally amazing. "I shall enjoy the world, relish it, smack my lips over it, girl, for years and years to come!"

CHAPTER VI. IN WHICH LADY BEAUTY HAS HER PORTRAIT PAINTED IN PRINTER'S INK.

Shall I tell you why I have written this story! It was because I mot Soulds Ton then styled "Lady Beauty," in her fifty third year; and her power to charm ist an age when charms are commonly supposed to be dead and gone; led me to sak, What is this woman's secret! And having searched into her life and character, and noted her ways venture to offer this imperfect record of her the scene.

life, and this still more imperfect picture of herself, for the study of her ex personally. I wish to convince women that it is a great mistake on their part to suppose that their power to please departs with youth. At all times I have noticed that man of some saldom admire-or, if you like, grow enamored ofwomen for beauty alone, but for character manner, taste and conversation. Now, wis le beauty (we must admit) lessens with time character, manner, taste and conversation may each be refined and enriched; and then I believe, by their improvement can quite compensate for the loss of personal charms. Mere beauty is but one bright, unchanging beam-it will grow even wearisome; but wit, sense, courtesy and humanity are forever casting forth new and unexpected rays, and enlivening intercourse with agreeable sur-prises. And so the story of Lady Beauty is

day. For they can do it if they try.] Sophia was without question far inferior in physical beauty to Sibyl, and I think most people would have said that she was not so handsome as Caroline. Her features were regular, her nose straight and fine, her complexion delicate and rosy; but still, in her face she was no model of womanhood. Her expression-and what is expression but character fixed in the countenance!-made Sophic what she was. Her delicate upper lip, with the hint of firmness in its fine line, told of resolution: the soft hazel eyes, with their up ward glar e, had a look of aspiration; the mouth was full of tenderness, ready to mold itself to every affectionate feeling. But what was this after all! Sophia's nature in So

written as a humble attempt to encourage women to try to be charming to their latest

She was the best dresser I ever knew. Of color, either by study or natural gift, she was a perfect mistress. Accordingly her appearance pleased numbers of people before they saw her face; and many a time as she went down the street the curiosity of those who walked behind was aroused to see what might be the face of the woman whose gown and mantle were so striking by the harmony or the contrast of their hue. Flowers, ribbons, brooches, all that sets off dress, she used with the most unerring taste. And she managed through all the changes of fashion to respect herself and her own figure and face; in the fashion she always would be, but still she modulated it so as to be the queen and not the slave. No doubt Sophia must have paid great attention to her dress, but I scarcely think she could have achieved such constant success, or so complete, had she not been s

Then her manners in society were capivating. Here I think the little mother's homilies were useful, indeed. With what graceful attention she heard what you had to say! How modestly she gave her own opinion! She was well read, and could take her part in most conversations with ease; and now and then she could deal out a witty stroke. Indeed, Sophia had a great deal of humor, but seldom gave it the rein in society Night was her time, with Car and Sibyl; and often the two more brilliant girls, as they laughed at her comical reminiscences of the day would feel how easily Sophia could out-

shine them if she tried. She loved the world. Here again the in fluence of her mother was perceptible, with this difference, that the world in her mother's language signified society, and nothing more, while Sophia would have included in it the whole of nature and life. I do not think I ever saw any one who had such a simple and unaffected enjoyment in living as she. walk in the woods was enchantment to her; and, on the other hand, I have seen her on the tiptoe of pleasurable excitement for s ball. She was no poetic recluse; sire never shunned society or its pleasures, but rather sought them. There was not a particle of affectation about her; indeed, she retained her girlishness and her love of girlish amuse

ments for an unusually long time. And she certainly remembered her mother's teaching in another particular; she tried to please. She knew that a woman ought to be an object of admiration and affection, and she ruled her whole life with this fact in view. But Sophia understood the art of charming, which, with all their gracefulness, few English women entirely do. Perhaps Nature feels that she has given our English women enough already, and, mindful of the limitation which ought to mark all mortal things, has withheld that one gift which would make them irresistible. Sophia knew that face and figure are not everything. She understood that it is the woman a man admires, not her eves or nose or lips or waist; the whole woman-person, iress, manner, talents and character Frenchwomen are in this respect more far sighted than our English ladies, but even Frenchwomen do not fully realize this great social truth. A woman who knows that her dress is tasteful and her expression agreeable and her conversation lively will be little dismayed to hear of crows' feet round her eyelids or gray hairs on her temples. Her better part is blooming amidst the gentle decay of more material charms. You will laugh when I tell you before the story ends how Sophia Temple, Lady Beauty, at the age of fifty-three, had a new lover, and what s

lover he was. One touch I must add to this picture Sophia was in the best sense of the word a religious woman. "Without love," cries great novelist, "I can fancy no gentleman." little diffidently I should add, without religion I can fancy no lady. Sophia's piety was in no way obtrusive, never puritanical, never ascetic, but gentle, animated and humane. It quite saved her from her mother's narrow and heartless and merely sparkling worldliness. Sophia loved the world, but had a hope beyond it, and her religion gave a richness, a sweetness, a seriousness to all her

I must admit, however, that many of Lady Beauty's own sex declared her to be nothing particular. That men admired her was not to be denied, but women would often ask dryly what it was for. When I knew her well enough to take such a liberty, I ventured to say to her one day that, greatly as she was praised by our sex, her own appeared to decline to accept her as by any means representative. She laughed with much gayety. "Some of us," she replied, "admire in ourselves what is forcible and striking. I believe you said to me yourself one day that Lady Macbeth and some other eminent ladies of the

ficiently vivid impression to satisfy both sexes. You added something like this: 1 somewhat doubt if Lady Macbeth would be altogether a success in the drawing room." "What, then, is your idea of a woman?"

"I have drawn up a set of beauty rules," she replied, rising and going to her desk. "They will be the best answer to your question." She laughed with great sportiveness, so that I could not tell whether she was jest ing or in carnest. So she gave me her beauty rules there and

then. But these I reserve for the last chapter of this story, when, in parting with my readers and my heroine, I shal narrate two curious illustrations of her power to please. I repeat, this story is written for the instruction of the tens of thousands of Englishwomen who can be like Sophia Temple if they try. Whoever of my fair readers will follow this amiable example shall be reifeved of the anxiety of glancing over her shoulder for ever to see what brighter beauty of later date and fresher charms may be coming up tehind. Youth and the attractions of youth need not be despised by such a woman; neither need they be envied. Her knowledge of society, her ways of the world, her familiarity with haracter-these, together with taste, refinement, virtue, and the desire to please, will give her the victory over time. Like our dear Lady Beauty, she, too, shall be charming to her latest day.

CHAPTER VII. A BOXING MATCH

Prendergast, who resided not far from Kettiewell, had occasional opportunities of mest-ing the Temples; and it had been the little mother's expectation that he might renew his suit, and, perbaps, after a time, draw Sophia's affections to himself. He made no sign, however; and for long enough it seemed as if our beroine was to have no further trouble from mankind. But at last—at the end of the five years after Percival's departure for Australia-a new lover came upon

His name was Done. He was the only son of one Mr. John Done, a retired merchant of great wealth, whose antecedents were generally described in this way, that he had something to do with leather. The Dones were plain people, but not vulgar; and having re-sided in Kettlewell for twenty years, and being charitable and religious, they had grad-ually made their way into our town society. In fact, they were now received in companies where, at their first coming, they dared not have set foot. Still, it was never forgotten

that Mr. Done was not altogether one of us When any stranger would make inquiry concerning him, the reply would generally be in this form: "Done is a worthy old fellow, and gives capital dinners. If you want a subscription for any good cause, go to Done. He is modest, unaffected, and not the least purse proud. In early life he had something to do with Lather." This last clause was a formula repeated as faithfully as if it was

line of "God Save the Queen." The virtue of the Dones being not of Mrs. Barbara Temple's kind-piety and charity could not make her regard anybody with favor-and their origin and manner being plain, she had never liked them. Indeed, at home she would not ridicule people in company-she would sometimes say to her daughters that nothing could ever be made of those glorified trades people. Then, with a characteristic dread of a too sweeping assertion, she would add: "Except sometimes, dears except sometimes." "You know, girls," she said one day, in her gay style, "it is a proverb that there is nothing like leather; I don't think there is." Which she delivered with one of her Frenchified faces of dislike, which always set the girls laughing. The plain Dones dreaded the witty, dashing, fashionable Mrs. Barbara Temple; and Mrs. Barbara Temple regarded the plain Dones with repressed, but not invisible, scorn.

There were John Done the first and John

with sons of self-made men, John Done,

junior, while lacking his father's native sense

and business energy, had inherited a double

portion of his homeliness, made quite intolerable by a brassy assurance and a disregard of other people's feelings, which indeed amounted to an anxiety to inflict pain wherever he could. At school he had been hated for a tyrant and a bully, and it was also known among the boys that he would tell a lie-and that not a schoolroom lie-whenever it suited his game. Percival Brent went to school with him, being just three years his junior. Percival was a bright, merry little boy, very well put together, and everybody's favorite, only that Done, who always disliked a boy in proportion to his school popularity or his educational promise, never lost an opportunity of tyrannizing over him. One day, when they were all in the p'ayground, Done, in making a high jump, fell very awkwardly, and amidst the roar of laughter which folowed, little Brent ran forward and made pretense of smoothing the ground after the overthrow of ... weighty Done, Exasperated by his fall, Done dashed forward and gave little Brent such a box on the ear as sent him spinning round, until he fell heavily to the ground. Brent sprang up, all knit into compactness with rage, and tried to give Done a blow on the face, which he scornfully warded off, and told the little lad not to be so impudent again. But Brent, bristling and stamping with passion, declared he would have a fight for it; which Done at first refused, for all the boys cried out at the idea. But as the little fellow would not be appeased Done, having satisfied his honor by one refusal, and always liking to inflict pain, accepted the challenge, and the two stripped to their shirts and went at it. For several rounds little Brent was knocked all over the place; and they all felt for the game little lad, but were sorry to see him so punished, and especially in a hopeless fight. For my lady readers will observe that one of the crowning achievements in the noble art. is to imprint your fist on your opponent's face. Now if your arms are only two feet long, while those of your opponent are three feet, it will follow that while he may be merrily hammering your countenance into ruin, your return blows may fall only on the unoffending air. This was just what hap-pened now; and poor little Brent was having a very dispiriting time of it. Some of the boys, however, noticed that he went down wonderfully easy; and others, who knew that the rector's groom was one of the best pair of fists in the county, began to think that perhaps the little fellow had picked up some of the tactics from Bobby "Miller," and was trying a waiting game. Done thought so, too; and being a large mealy boy, with rather uncertain wind, he resolved to bring the thing to an end, and gave Brent one savage blow, which produced very disagreeable results on the poor little man's nose. Brent was not knocked out of it, however, as Done hoped; but the very opposite, He was strung together with fury; but even in his rage he did not forget the instructions of his master, Bobby "Miller." He rushed at Done; and, while the other in his magnificence was guarding himself carelessly, little Brent "got in," and began to return on Done's face all the blows he had received. principal and interest. How those little fists flew and hammered! How Done retreated over the ground, wildly trying to get his adversary outside range again, while still little Brent drubbed away with astounding rapidity and vigor! The fact was the little fox was quite fresh, while Done was thoroughly blown. Bobby "Miller" knew his business, and would have been proud of his young master had he been there to see. At ast Done, nearly blind with blows and rage, made one grand effort to destroy his enemy with an appearance of ease. It was fatal to | ket.

and not likely to miss an opening. In rapid succession he managed to plant three blows just under Done's left eye, the last delivered with such force that it sent the lumpy fellow to grass, where he lay vanquished, Brent standing over him with fists still tlinched. and burning, it seemed, for a little more. That was sixteen years ago. John Done, junior, was now a rather bulky young man, with a white flat face, very small sunken eyes, a smile which expressed a narrow mind satisfied with itself, and unprepossessing manners. His habits, too, had not been the best, and it was known in Kettlewell that he was, in his sly way, a man of dissolute habits. He had now been absent, off and on, for nearly four years; but when he returned home he happened to hear of Sophia Temple and her little affair with Percival Brent. By a curious chance he had met Brent in Australia himself, and, although outwardly civil to him, he remembered with a grudge the thrashing of years gone by; for his nature was of that sluggish sort, where revenge burns long and sullenly, like fuel in a slow combustion stove. When he came home and heard about Sophia, the thought struck him what a nice girl she was, and what a fine thing it would be to marry the woman for whom his former foe was working now in another hemisphere! He pondered. His eyes lit with their half-animal gleam. He said: "I can manage it."

him. Brent was really warm to his work,

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. TEMPLE DELIVERS A SERMON. Mrs. Barbara Temple was sitting in her favorite armchair, and the sunshine of a bright October morning was shining in the room But that pleasant light revealed clearly the signs of time, which had for long enough been more or less manifest in the old woman's face. She either did not or could not any lo: r dress herself with the same deceptive skin as in days gone by, and now in every feature of her face any eye could see that she

was an old woman-a very old woman. indeed. She sat wrapped up carefully in a spendid Indian shawl, and a fire blazed on the hearth; and she looked cold and somewhat liftess, although her eyes were still bright and her voice strong. Sophia, who

stayed always with her, was reading The Morning Post to her, but the old woman did not listen with her accustomed attention. "Bophy," she said at last, "I had a visit from Mrs. Done yesterday."

"Indeed, mamma," Sophia replied. She bit ber lip, and so hid a smile, spirited and conemptuous, with a dash of amusement in it. And what does Mrs. Done want, mamma! "She says her son is in love with you." "Delightful, mamma!" Sophia replied, now rith open amusement on her face. So he has thrown his handkerchief at last. He may pick it up again, mamma, and put it in his

"Now, Sophia, don't talk in that hasty, in onsiderate way," the old woman said. "In all those cases we should consider, dear, there is nothing like-"Leather, mamma!" Sophia cried, merrily, estehing up her mother's old mocking phrase. The bright October sunshine and some whin

f her own feelings had put her in good spirits

"Very pleasant, dear," the little mother renarked, shaking her head soberly. Somehow her whole style of speech was relaxing in energy: her words were pitched low; she did not speak with her former decision. Presently

"You must remember young Mr. Doan was

never in trade; and beside, Sophia, he will settle twenty thousand pounds on you!" "Can't be had under forty, mamma!" Sophia seemed resolved to treat the matter in this jocular way. It was plain that she realised that she and her mother had changed positions; she was virtually mistress now; there might be argument, but no struggle of will. "Sha'n't cry 'cherry ripe' under forty thousand pounds, mamma!" And Sophia tossed her head and looked saucy and engaging, and cheap at double the money.

"Now listen to me, Sophia," her mother said. "You will never have such another offer-from a money point of view." "Well, mamma, I will be serious," Sophia answered, suiting her face to her words. "I would not marry that man for anything he could give me. To begin with, I know what his life has been

"Now, my dear Sophia," her mother said. with a deprecating gesture, "I will not hear anything about his manner of life. The men are all in fault in that way." ("One I know is not!" Sophia tenderly thought, clasping her darling's memory to

Done the second. As is very often the case her heart.) "All are in fault that way," continued Mrs Temple. "Some let us know it, others manage to hide it. In fact, all are alike, And, indeed, Sophia, better marry a man who, before marriage, has has seen the world, than one who will make you unhappy after. The wilder the bachelor, the steadier the husband, so I often have found it." "Now you don't mean it, mamma; you

know you don't." "I do mean it, indeed, dear; and, besides, whose fault is it if men are wild? Ours, my dear; ours alone. We are so fond of conquest and impression that we never leave them alone. We get them into the habit of mind, dear. Have I not watched women More especially if a man is at all celebrated, we long to make an impression. All women do. My dear Sophia, the greatest prude that ever lived is pleased if she hears that a celebrated man admires her. Be he married or single, she will not care; she had rather have the tribute of admiration than not have it. O. Sophia, we are quite as much to blame as the men. We all like to have them at our feet: I liked it myself, dear!"

"When they are celebrated, dear, remarkable, worth catching, you know." "What is Mr. Done celebrated for?" Sophia asked, scornfully.

"Money, dear. As good a thing as any other. Some men are conspicuous for fortune, others for looks, others for talent, others for family. But when a man is conspicuous for anything, women like to have his admiration, and that is how half the men are spoiled, dear: we do it ourselves. Why, even if a man is conspicuous for virtue, most of us would like to bring him to the ground-to have him sigh for us only once; and then we can toss our heads and be as good as we

please. Our vanity is gratified." "Now, mamma," Sophia said, rather shocked at this speech, and not knowing whether her mother was serious or not, but resolved to treat it as jocular, "this is only your merry way; do be serious."

"I will, dear, if you will be serious, too." "Very well, then. Try and make up your mind to marry this young man. Twenty thousand pounds, Sophia!"

"Mamma, figures would not write the sum that I would marry him for. He is a vulgar, selfish, odious fellow. Marry him!" Sophia shivered as when some one walks over our grave. "Call him husband!" She made a grimace which her mother could not have surpassed, and which clinched

the discussion. "Very well, Sophy," the old woman said sinking back in her armchair rather wearily, "you must have your own way. Only remember, dear, when I am gone, you had the chance of wealth and ease before I left you." The word alarmed Sophia afresh. She was certain now of what her future would be:

but she put on a bright face. "Never mind, mamma, you are not going to leave me vet; and when you do, if all else fails, I can ew gloves at twopence a pair; but I will not marry a man the very thought of whom makes my flesh creep. Oh, mamma, mamma," Fophia cried, relapsing into gayety "ow that her toint was won, "for making you dslike an offer, there's nothing like teather.

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